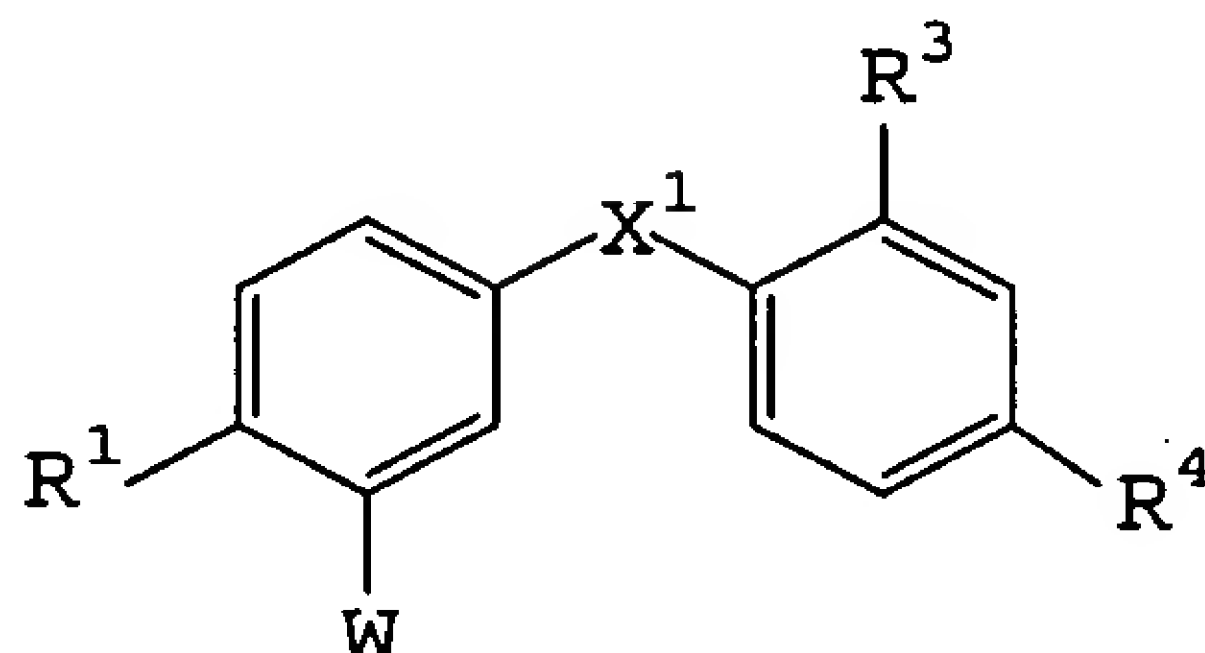


**IN THE CLAIMS**

Claims 1-8 (Canceled)

Claim 9 (Previously Presented) A benzene derivative represented by the following formula:



wherein

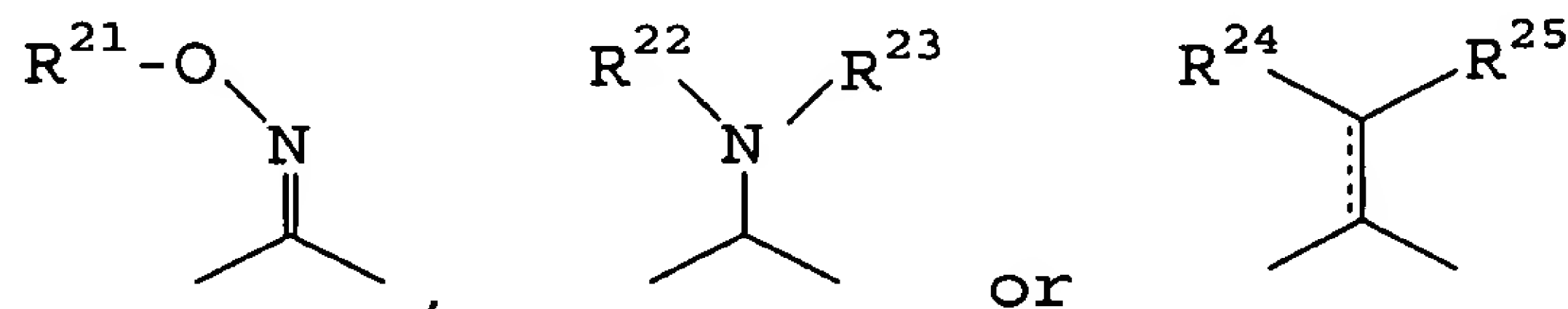
R<sup>1</sup> represents a halogen atom, a cyano group, a nitro group, an unprotected or protected hydroxyl group, an unprotected or protected amino group, a mercapto group or an unsubstituted or substituted alkyl, alkenyl, cycloalkyl, aryl, aralkyl, alkoxy, aryloxy, acyl, alkoxycarbonyl, aryloxycarbonyl, carbamoyl, alkylthio, alkylsulfinyl, alkylsulfonyl, alkylamino, acylamino, alkylsulfonylamino, arylsulfonylamino or heterocyclic group;

R<sup>3</sup> represents a halogen atom, a cyano group, a nitro group, an unprotected or protected carboxyl group, an unprotected or protected hydroxyl group, an unprotected or protected amino group, a mercapto group, a carbamoyl group or an unsubstituted or substituted alkyl, alkenyl, cycloalkyl, aryl, aralkyl, alkoxy, aryloxy, acyl, alkoxycarbonyl, aryloxycarbonyl, alkylthio, alkylsulfinyl, alkylsulfonyl, alkylamino, acylamino, alkylsulfonylamino, arylsulfonylamino or heterocyclic group;

R<sup>4</sup> represents a cyano group, a nitro group, an unprotected or protected carboxyl group, an unprotected or protected hydroxyl group, an unprotected or protected amino group, a mercapto group or an unsubstituted or substituted alkyl, alkenyl, cycloalkyl, aryl, aralkyl, alkoxy, aryloxy, acyl, alkoxycarbonyl, aryloxycarbonyl, carbamoyl, alkylthio, alkylsulfinyl,

alkylsulfonyl, alkylamino, acylamino, alkylsulfonylamino, arylsulfonylamino or heterocyclic group;

X<sup>1</sup> represents -C(O)-, -CH(OH)-, -CH<sub>2</sub>- or a group of the following formula:



wherein R<sup>21</sup> represents an unsubstituted or substituted alkyl, alkenyl, cycloalkyl, aryl, aralkyl, acyl or heterocycle-lower alkyl group;

R<sup>22</sup> and R<sup>23</sup> may be the same or different represent a hydrogen atom or an unsubstituted or substituted alkyl, alkenyl, cycloalkyl, aryl, aralkyl, acyl, carbamoyl, alkylsulfinyl, alkylsulfonyl, arylsulfonyl or heterocyclic group; and

R<sup>24</sup> and R<sup>25</sup> may be the same or different represent a hydrogen atom, a halogen atom, a cyano group, a nitro group, an unprotected or protected carboxyl group, an unprotected or protected hydroxyl group, an unprotected or protected amino group, a mercapto group or an unsubstituted or substituted alkyl, alkenyl, cycloalkyl, aryl, aralkyl, alkoxy, aryloxy, acyl, alkoxycarbonyl, aryloxycarbonyl, carbamoyl, alkylthio, alkylsulfinyl, alkylsulfonyl, alkylamino, acylamino, alkylsulfonylamino, arylsulfonylamino or heterocyclic group; the double line of which one line is a broken line denotes a single bond or a double bond; and

W represents -Z-COR<sup>26</sup>, -Z-COOR<sup>2</sup>, -O-CH<sub>2</sub>COOR<sup>2</sup> or -O-CH<sub>2</sub>CH<sub>2</sub>COOR<sup>2</sup>, wherein Z represents -(CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>n</sub>- in which n represents 0, 1, 2 or 3 with the proviso that when W is -Z-COOR<sup>2</sup>, n is 2 or 3, -CH<sub>2</sub>CH(CH<sub>3</sub>)-, -CH=CH- or -CH<sub>2</sub>CH=CH-; R<sup>2</sup> represents a hydrogen atom or a protecting group for carboxyl group; and R<sup>26</sup> represents -NHR<sup>27</sup> or -NHSO<sub>2</sub>R<sup>28</sup> in which R<sup>27</sup> and R<sup>28</sup> independently represent an unsubstituted or substituted alkyl, alkenyl, cycloalkyl, aryl or aralkyl group;

or a salt thereof.

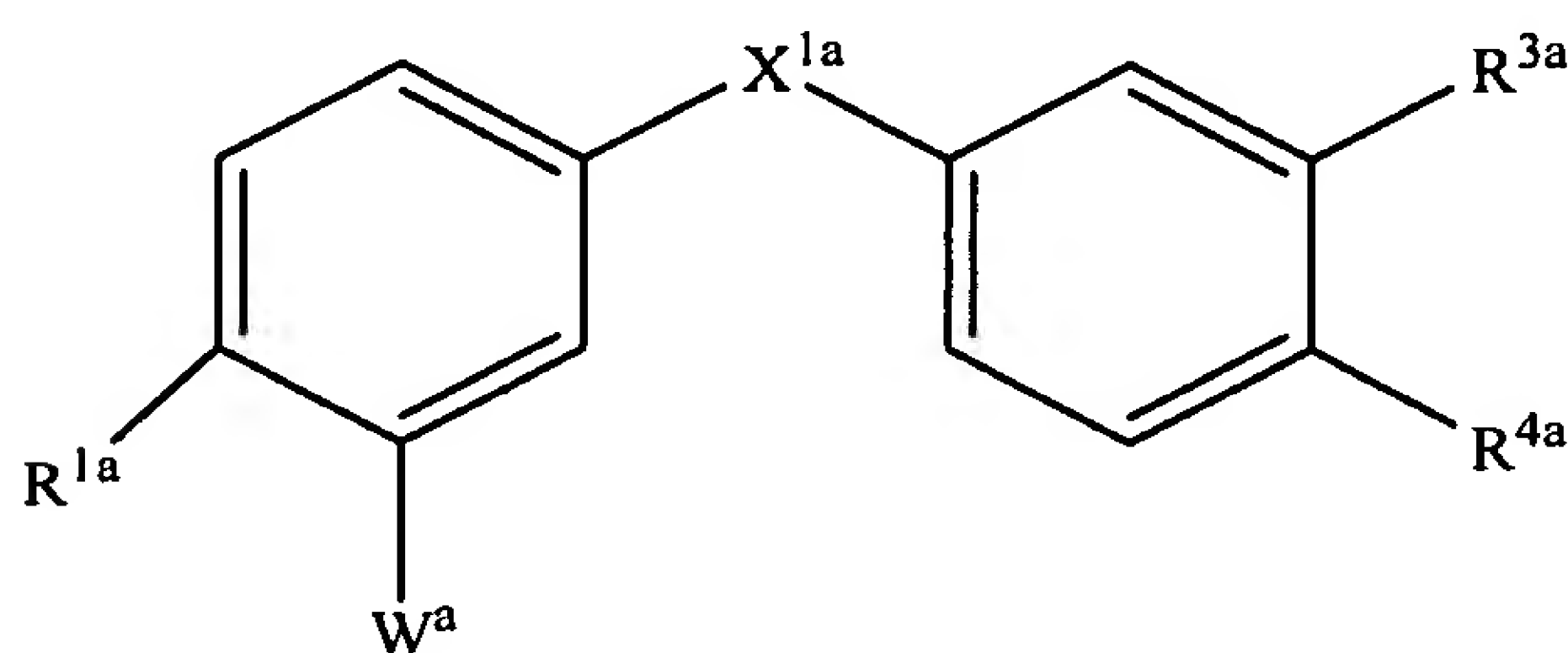
Claim 10 (Previously Presented) A benzene derivative or a salt thereof according to Claim 9, wherein W is  $-Z'-COOR^{2'}$ ,  $-Z'-CONH-SO_2R^{28'}$ ,  $-CONH-CH_2COOR^{2'}$  or  $-CONH-CH_2CH_2COOR^{2'}$  wherein Z' represents  $-(CH_2)_{n'}$  in which n' is 0, 1 or 2,

with the proviso that when W is  $-Z-COOR^2$ , n is 2 or 3, or  $-CH=CH-$ ;  $R^{28'}$  represents an unsubstituted or substituted alkyl group; and  $R^{2'}$  represents a hydrogen atom or a protecting group for carboxyl group; and  $X^1$  is  $-C(O)-$ ,  $-CH(OH)-$  or  $-CH_2-$ .

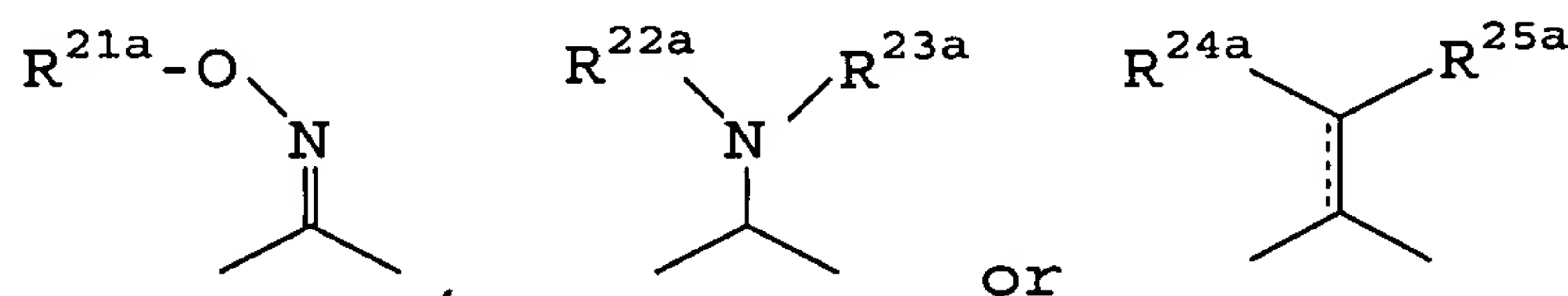
Claim 11 (Previously Presented) A benzene derivative or a salt thereof according to Claim 10, wherein  $R^1$  is an unprotected or protected hydroxyl group or an unsubstituted or substituted alkoxy group;  $R^3$  is an unprotected or protected hydroxyl group or an unsubstituted or substituted alkoxy group; and  $R^4$  is an unprotected or protected hydroxyl group or an unsubstituted or substituted alkoxy group.

Claims 12-15 (Cancelled)

Claim 16 (Previously Presented) A benzene derivative represented by the following formula:



wherein  $R^{1a}$  represents a halogen atom, a cyano group, a nitro group, an unprotected or protected hydroxyl group, a mercapto group or an unsubstituted or substituted alkyl, alkenyl, cycloalkyl, aryl, aralkyl, alkoxy, aryloxy, acyl, alkoxycarbonyl, aryloxycarbonyl, carbamoyl, alkylthio, alkylsulfinyl, alkylsulfonyl, alkylamino, acylamino, alkylsulfonylamino, arylsulfonylamino or heterocyclic group;  $R^{3a}$  and  $R^{4a}$ , which may be the same or different, each represent a halogen atom, a cyano group, a nitro group, an unprotected or protected carboxyl group, an unprotected or protected hydroxyl group, an unprotected or protected amino group, a mercapto group or an unsubstituted or substituted alkyl, alkenyl, cycloalkyl, aryl, aralkyl, alkoxy, aryloxy, acyl, alkoxycarbonyl, aryloxycarbonyl, carbamoyl, alkylthio, alkylsulfinyl, alkylsulfonyl, alkylamino, acylamino, alkylsulfonylamino, arylsulfonylamino or heterocyclic group;  $X^{1a}$  represents  $-C(O)-$ ,  $-CH(OH)-$ ,  $-CH_2-$  or a group of the following formula:

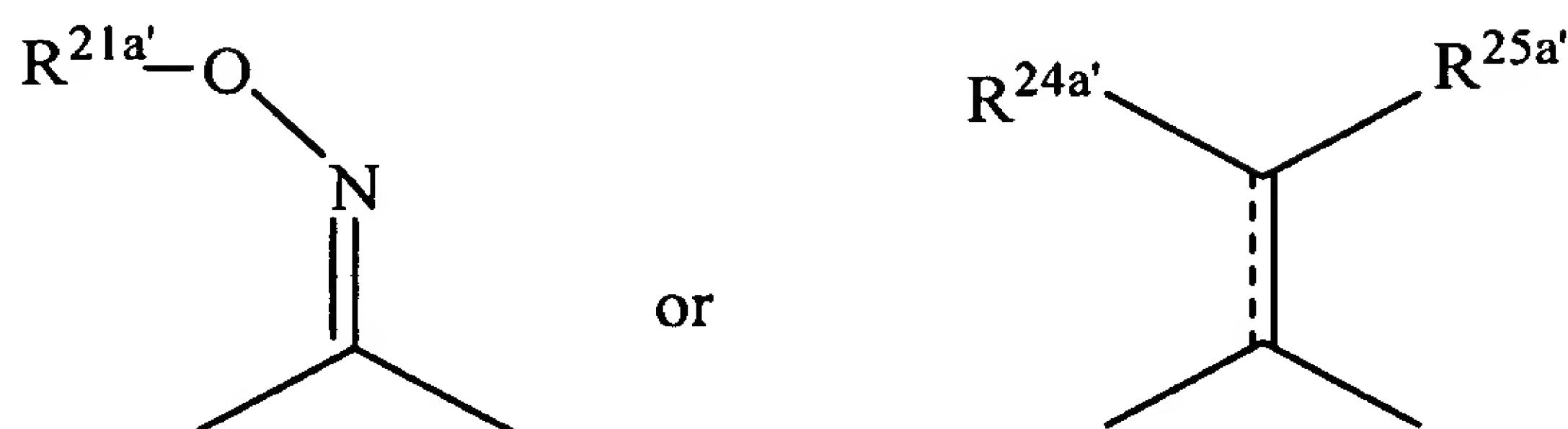


wherein  $R^{21a}$  represents an unsubstituted or substituted alkyl, alkenyl, cycloalkyl, aryl, aralkyl, acyl or heterocycle-lower alkyl group;  $R^{22a}$  and  $R^{23a}$  may be the same or different represent a hydrogen atom or an unsubstituted or substituted alkyl, alkenyl, cycloalkyl, aryl, aralkyl, acyl, carbamoyl, alkylsulfinyl, alkylsulfonyl, arylsulfonyl or heterocyclic group;  $R^{24a}$  and  $R^{25a}$  may be the same or different represent a hydrogen atom, a halogen atom, a cyano group, a nitro group, an unprotected or protected carboxyl group, an unprotected or protected hydroxyl group, an unprotected or protected amino group, a mercapto group or an unsubstituted or substituted alkyl, alkenyl, cycloalkyl, aryl, aralkyl, alkoxy, aryloxy, acyl, alkoxycarbonyl, aryloxycarbonyl, carbamoyl, alkylthio, alkylsulfinyl, alkylsulfonyl,

alkylamino, acylamino, alkylsulfonylamino, arylsulfonylamino or heterocyclic group; and the double line of which one line is a broken line represents a single bond or a double bond; and  $W^a$  represents  $-Z^a-COR^{26a}$ ,  $-Z^a-COOR^{2a}$ ,  $-O-CH_2COOR^{2a}$  or  $-O-CH_2CH_2COOR^{2a}$  wherein  $Z^a$  represents  $-(CH_2)_n^a$ ,  $n^a$  is 0, 1, 2 or 3 with the proviso that when  $W^a$  is  $-Z^a-COOR^{2a}$ ,  $n^a$  can not be 1,  $-CH_2CH(CH_3)-$ ,  $-CH=CH-$  or  $-CH_2CH=CH-$ ;  $R^{2a}$  represents a hydrogen atom or a protecting group for carboxyl group; and  $R^{26a}$  represents  $-NHR^{27a}$  or  $-NHSO_2R^{28a}$  in which  $R^{27a}$  and  $R^{28a}$  independently represent an unsubstituted or substituted alkyl, alkenyl, cycloalkyl, aryl or aralkyl group;

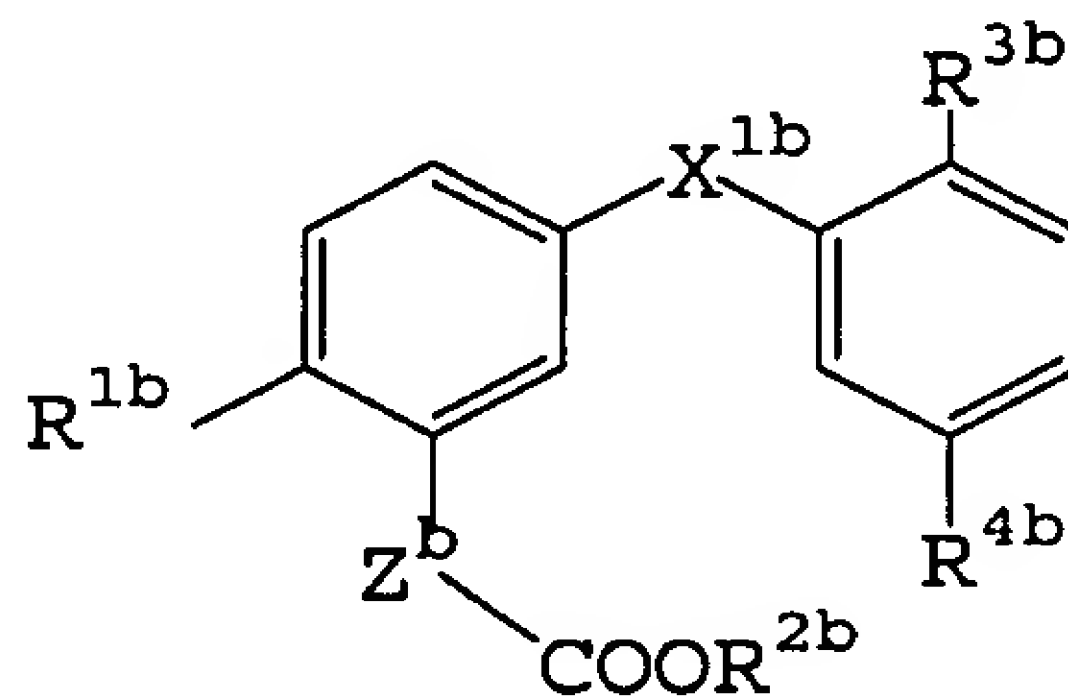
or a salt thereof.

Claim 17 (Previously Presented) A benzene derivative or a salt thereof according to Claim 16, wherein  $R^{1a}$  is an unprotected or protected hydroxyl group or an unsubstituted or substituted alkoxy group;  $R^{3a}$  and  $R^{4a}$  may be the same or different and represent an unprotected or protected hydroxyl group or an unsubstituted or substituted alkoxy group;  $X^{1a}$  is  $-C(O)-$ ,  $-CH(OH)-$ ,  $-CH_2-$  or a group of the following formula:



wherein  $R^{21a'}$  represents an unsubstituted or substituted alkyl, aralkyl or heterocycle-lower alkyl group;  $R^{24a'}$  and  $R^{25a'}$  may be the same or different represent a hydrogen atom, an unprotected or protected carboxyl group or an unsubstituted or substituted alkyl, alkoxycarbonyl, aryloxycarbonyl or carbamoyl group; and  $W^a$  represents  $-Z^{a'}-\text{COR}^{26a'}$ ,  $-Z^{a'}-\text{COOR}^{2a'}$ ,  $-\text{O}-\text{CH}_2\text{COOR}^{2a'}$ ,  $-\text{O}-\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{COOR}^{2a'}$ ,  $-\text{CONH}-\text{CH}_2\text{COOR}^{2a'}$ , or  $-\text{CONH}-\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{COOR}^{2a'}$  wherein  $Z^{a'}$  represents  $-(\text{CH}_2)_{n^{a'}}-$  in which  $n^{a'}$  is 0, 1, 2 or 3 with the proviso that when  $W^a$  is  $-Z^{a'}-\text{COOR}^{2a'}$ ,  $n^{a'}$  is 2 or 3,  $-\text{CH}_2\text{CH}(\text{CH}_3)-$ ,  $-\text{CH}=\text{CH}-$  or  $-\text{CH}_2\text{CH}=\text{CH}-$ ;  $R^{2a'}$  represents a hydrogen atom or a protecting group for carboxyl group; and  $R^{26a'}$  represents  $-\text{NHSO}_2R^{28a'}$  in which  $R^{28a'}$  is an unsubstituted or substituted alkyl group.

Claim 18 (Previously Presented) A benzene derivative represented by the following formula:



wherein  $R^{1b}$  represents a halogen atom, a cyano group, a nitro group, an unprotected or protected hydroxyl group, an unprotected or protected amino group, a mercapto group or an unsubstituted or substituted alkyl, alkenyl, cycloalkyl, aryl, aralkyl, alkoxy, aryloxy, acyl,

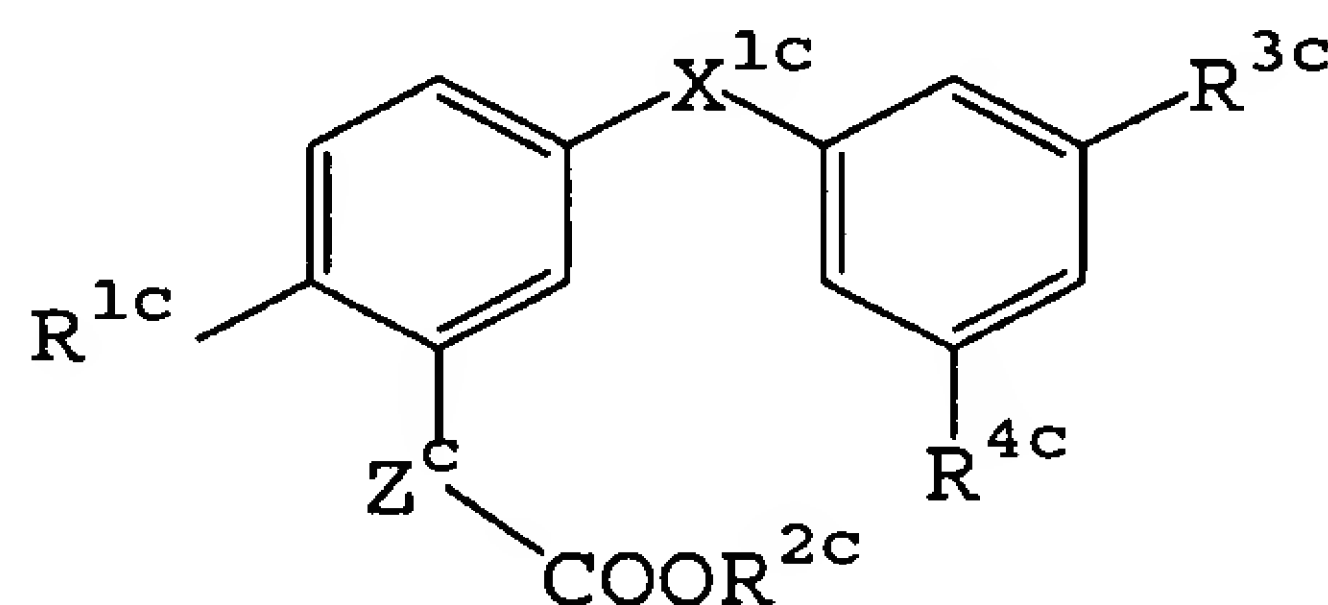


alkoxycarbonyl, aryloxycarbonyl, carbamoyl, alkylthio, alkylsulfinyl, alkylsulfonyl, alkylamino, acylamino, alkylsulfonylamino, arylsulfonylamino or heterocyclic group;  $R^{2b}$  represents a hydrogen atom or a protecting group for carboxyl group;  $R^{3b}$  and  $R^{4b}$  may be the same or different represent a cyano group, a nitro group, an unprotected or protected carboxyl group, an unprotected or protected hydroxyl group, an unprotected or protected amino group, a mercapto group or an unsubstituted or substituted alkyl, alkenyl, cycloalkyl, aryl, aralkyl, alkoxy, aryloxy, acyl, alkoxycarbonyl, aryloxycarbonyl, carbamoyl, alkylthio, alkylsulfinyl, alkylsulfonyl, alkylamino, acylamino, alkylsulfonylamino, arylsulfonylamino or heterocyclic group;  $X^{1b}$  represents  $-C(O)-$ ,  $-CH(OH)-$  or  $-CH_2-$ ; and  $Z^b$  represents  $-(CH_2)_n-$ , wherein  $n^b$  represents 2 or 3 or  $-CH=CH-$ ;

or a salt thereof.

Claim 19 (Previously Presented): A benzene derivative or a salt thereof according to Claim 18, wherein  $R^{1b}$  is an unsubstituted or substituted alkoxy group;  $R^{3b}$  and  $R^{4b}$  may be the same or different represent an unprotected or protected hydroxyl group or an unsubstituted or substituted alkoxy group;  $X^{1b}$  is  $-C(O)-$ ; and  $Z^b$  is  $-(CH_2)_2-$  or  $-(CH_2)_3-$ .

Claim 20 (Previously Presented) A benzene derivative represented by the following formula:



wherein  $R^{1c}$  represents a halogen atom, a cyano group, a nitro group, an unprotected or protected hydroxyl group, an unprotected or protected amino group, a mercapto group or an

unsubstituted or substituted alkyl, alkenyl, cycloalkyl, aryl, aralkyl, alkoxy, aryloxy, acyl, alkoxycarbonyl, aryloxycarbonyl, carbamoyl, alkylthio, alkylsulfinyl, alkylsulfonyl, alkylamino, acylamino, alkylsulfonylamino, arylsulfonylamino or heterocyclic group;  $R^{2c}$  represents a hydrogen atom or a protecting group for carboxyl group;  $R^{3c}$  and  $R^{4c}$  may be the same or different represent a halogen atom, a cyano group, a nitro group, an unprotected or protected carboxyl group, an unprotected or protected hydroxyl group, an unprotected or protected amino group, a mercapto group or an unsubstituted or substituted alkenyl, cycloalkyl, aryl, aralkyl, alkoxy, aryloxy, acyl, alkoxycarbonyl, aryloxycarbonyl, carbamoyl, alkylthio, alkylsulfinyl, alkylsulfonyl, alkylamino, acylamino, alkylsulfonylamino, arylsulfonylamino or heterocyclic group;  $X^{1c}$  represents  $-C(O)-$ ,  $-CH(OH)-$  or  $-CH_2-$ ; and  $Z^c$  represents  $-(CH_2)_{n^c}-$ , wherein  $n^c$  represents 2 or 3 or  $-CH=CH-$ ;

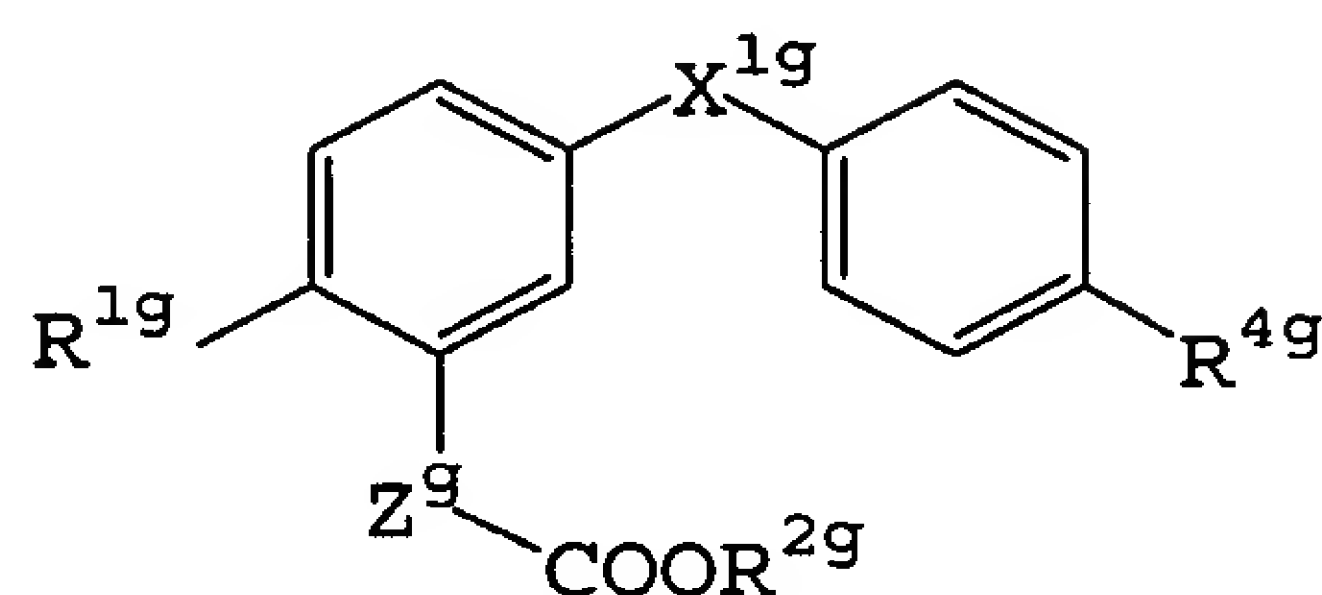
or a salt thereof.

Claim 21 (Previously Presented) A benzene derivative or a salt thereof according to Claim 20, wherein  $R^{1c}$  is an unsubstituted or substituted alkoxy group;  $R^{2c}$  is a hydrogen atom or a protecting group for carboxyl group;  $R^{3c}$  and  $R^{4c}$  may be the same or different represent an unsubstituted or substituted alkoxy group;  $X^{1c}$  represents  $-C(O)-$ ; and  $Z^c$  represents  $-(CH_2)_2-$  or  $-(CH_2)_3-$ .

Claims 22-27 (Cancelled)

Claim 28. (Previously Presented) A benzene derivative represented by the following formula:





wherein  $R^{1g}$  and  $R^{4g}$  may be the same or different represent an unprotected or protected hydroxyl group or an unsubstituted or substituted alkoxy group;  $X^{1g}$  is  $-C(O)-$ ,  $-CH(OH)-$  or  $-CH_2-$ ;  $Z^g$  is  $-(CH_2)_n^g-$ , wherein  $n^g$  represents 2 or 3; and  $R^{2g}$  is a hydrogen atom or a protecting group for carboxyl group;

or a salt thereof.

Claim 29 (Previously Presented) A compound or a salt thereof according to Claim 9, wherein said compound is a compound that has an activity of antagonistically inhibiting the combination between AP-1 and a recognition sequence thereof.

Claim 30 (Canceled)

Claim 31 (Previously Presented) A method for inhibiting AP-1 which comprises contacting a compound or a salt thereof according to Claim 9 with an AP-1 binding site.

Claim 32-34 (Canceled)

Claim 35 (Previously Presented) The compound or a salt thereof according to Claim 9, which antagonistically inhibits the combination between AP-1 and a recognition sequence thereof.

Claim 36 (Canceled).

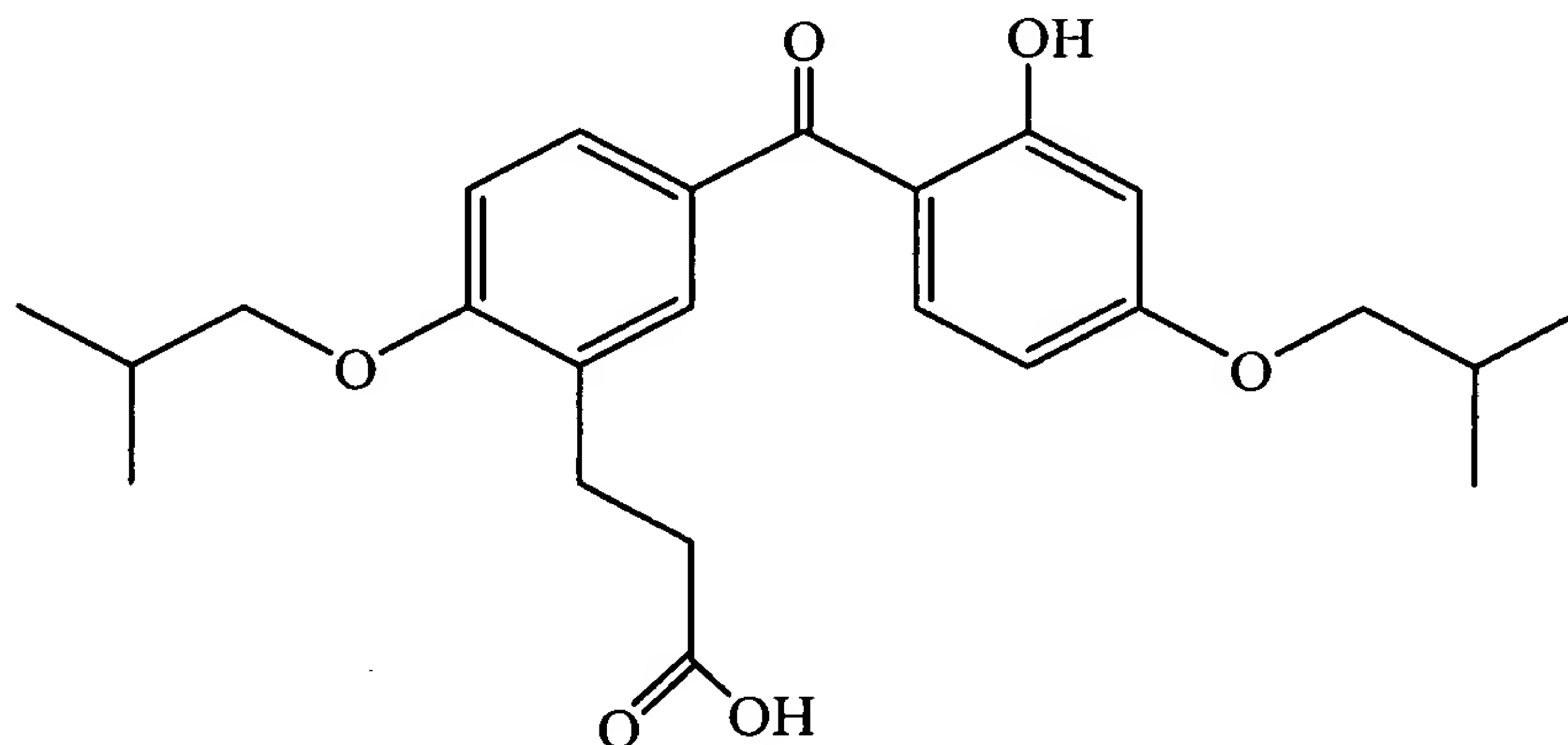
Claim 37 (Previously Presented) A method for inhibiting AP-1 which comprises administering an effective amount of the compound or a salt thereof according to Claim 9 to a subject in need thereof.

Claim 38 (Canceled)

Claim 39. (Previously Presented) An agent for treating an autoimmune disease, which comprises a compound or a salt thereof according to Claim 9.

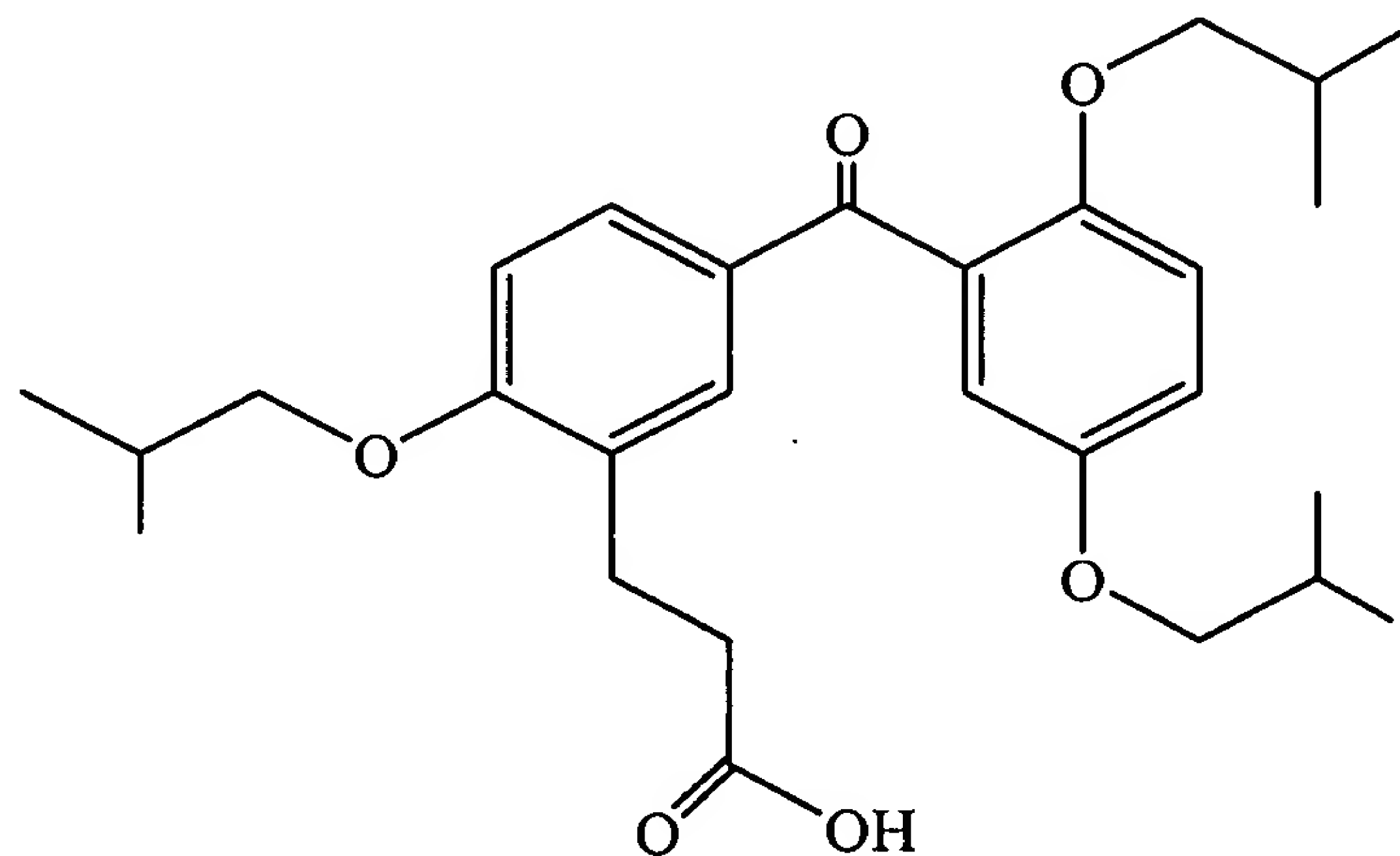
Claim 40. (Previously Presented) A composition comprising the compound or a salt thereof according to Claim 9 in an amount sufficient to inhibit AP-1 activity.

Claim 41. (Previously Presented) A benzene derivative according to Claim 9, having the following formula:

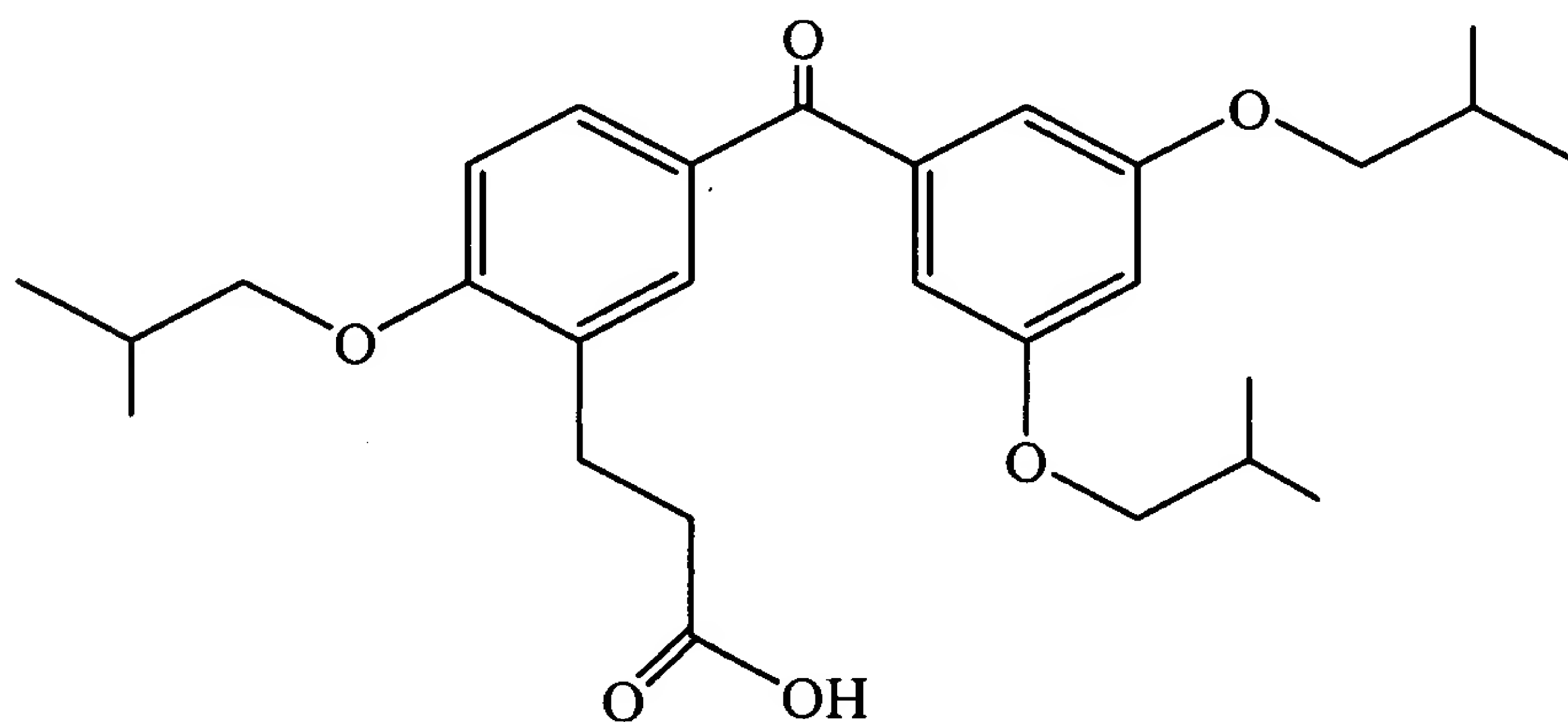


Claims 42-44 (Canceled)

Claim 45. (Previously Presented) A benzene derivative according to Claim 18,  
having the formula:

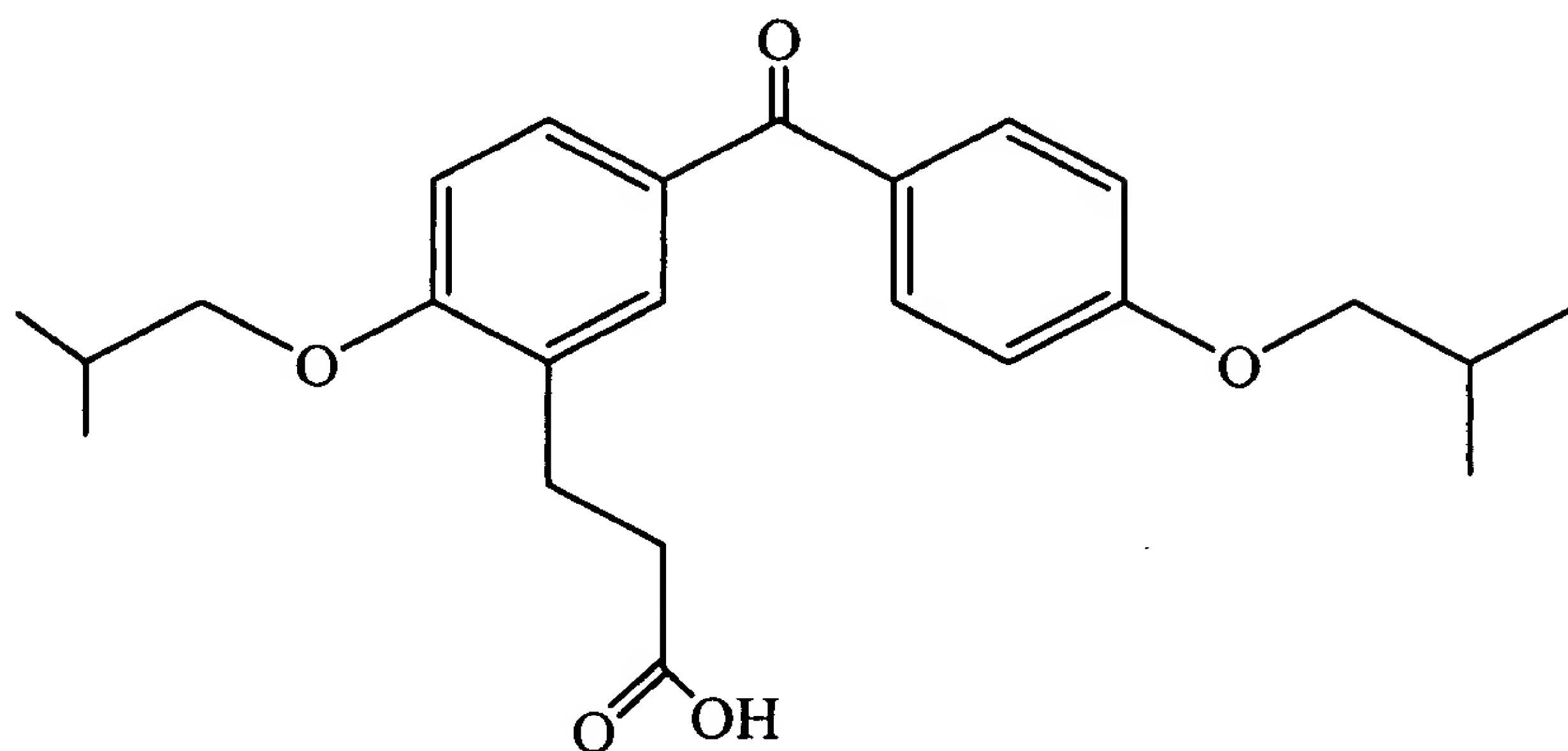


Claim 46 (Previously Presented) The benzene derivative according to Claim 20,  
having the formula:

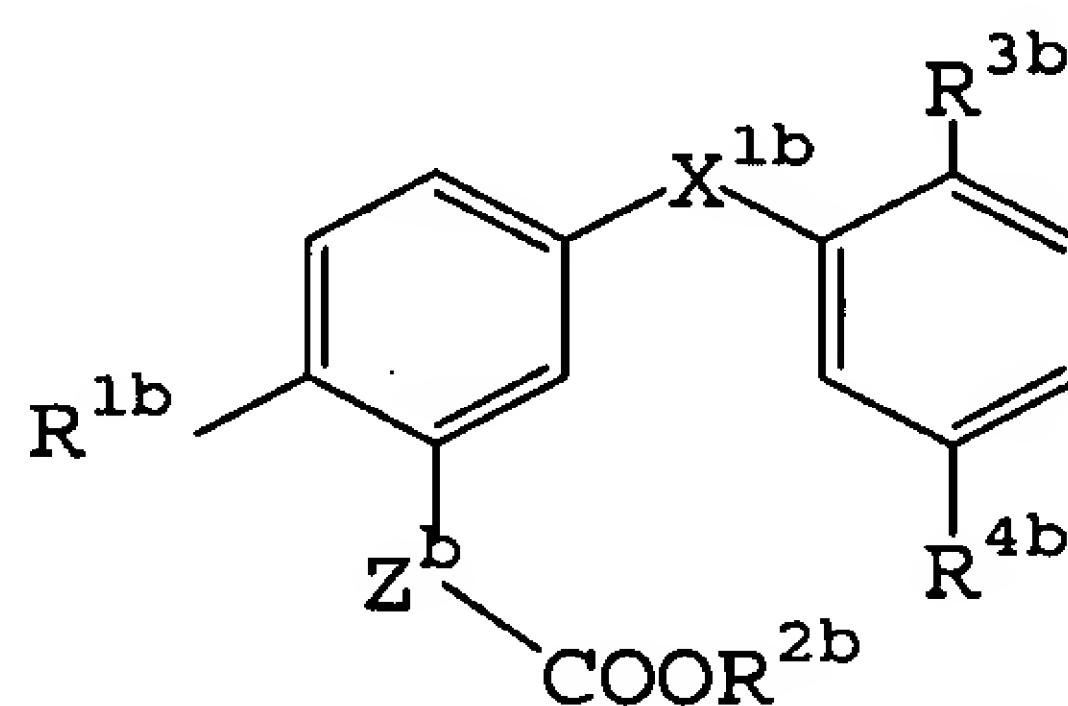


Claims 47-49 (Cancelled)

Claim 50. (Previously Presented) The benzene derivative according to Claim 28,  
having the formula:



Claim 51. (Previously Presented) A benzene derivative represented by the following formula:

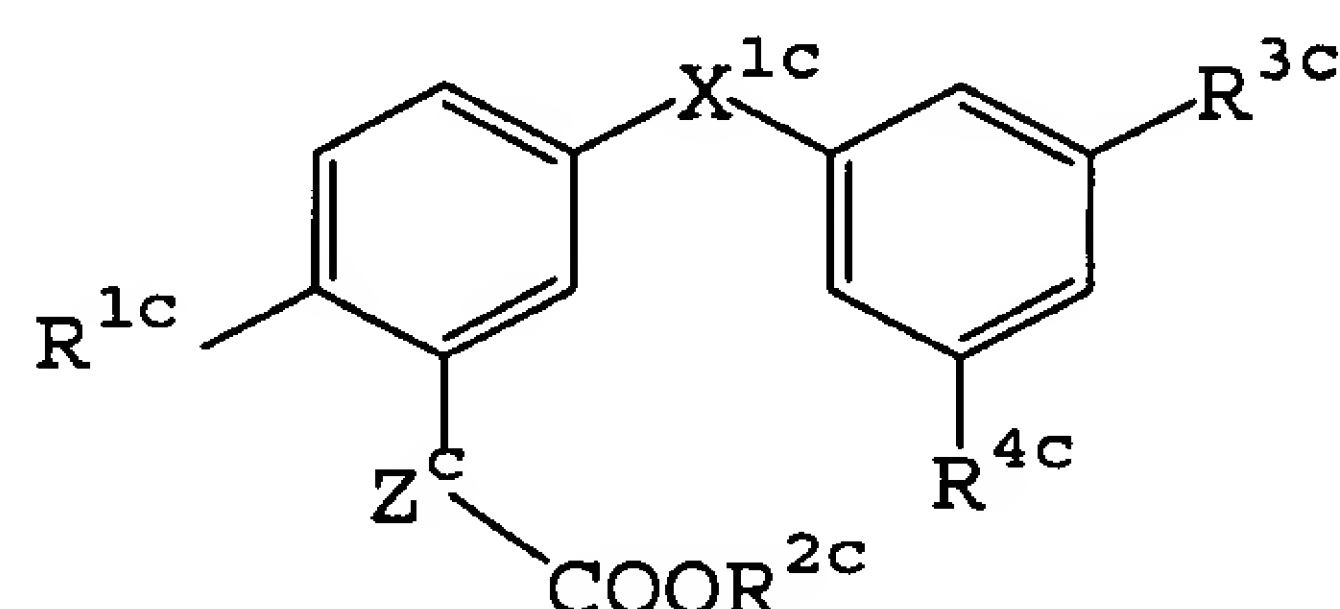


wherein  $R^{1b}$  represents a halogen atom, a cyano group, a nitro group, a protected hydroxyl group, an unprotected or protected amino group, a mercapto group or an unsubstituted or substituted alkyl, alkenyl, cycloalkyl, aryl, aralkyl, alkoxy, aryloxy, acyl, alkoxycarbonyl, aryloxycarbonyl, carbamoyl, alkylthio, alkylsulfinyl, alkylsulfonyl, alkylamino, acylamino, alkylsulfonylamino, arylsulfonylamino or heterocyclic group;  $R^{2b}$  represents a hydrogen atom or a protecting group for carboxyl group;  $R^{3b}$  and  $R^{4b}$  may be the same or different represent a cyano group, a nitro group, an unprotected or protected carboxyl group, an unprotected or protected hydroxyl group, an unprotected or protected amino group, a mercapto group or an unsubstituted or substituted alkyl, alkenyl, cycloalkyl, aryl, aralkyl, alkoxy, aryloxy, acyl, alkoxycarbonyl, aryloxycarbonyl, carbamoyl, alkylthio, alkylsulfinyl, alkylsulfonyl, alkylamino, acylamino, alkylsulfonylamino, arylsulfonylamino or heterocyclic group;  $X^{1b}$

represents  $-\text{C}(\text{O})-$ ,  $-\text{CH}(\text{OH})-$  or  $-\text{CH}_2-$ ; and  $\text{Z}^b$  represents  $-(\text{CH}_2)_n^b$  - ( $n^b$  represents 2 or 3 or  $-\text{CH}=\text{CH}-$ ;

or a salt thereof.

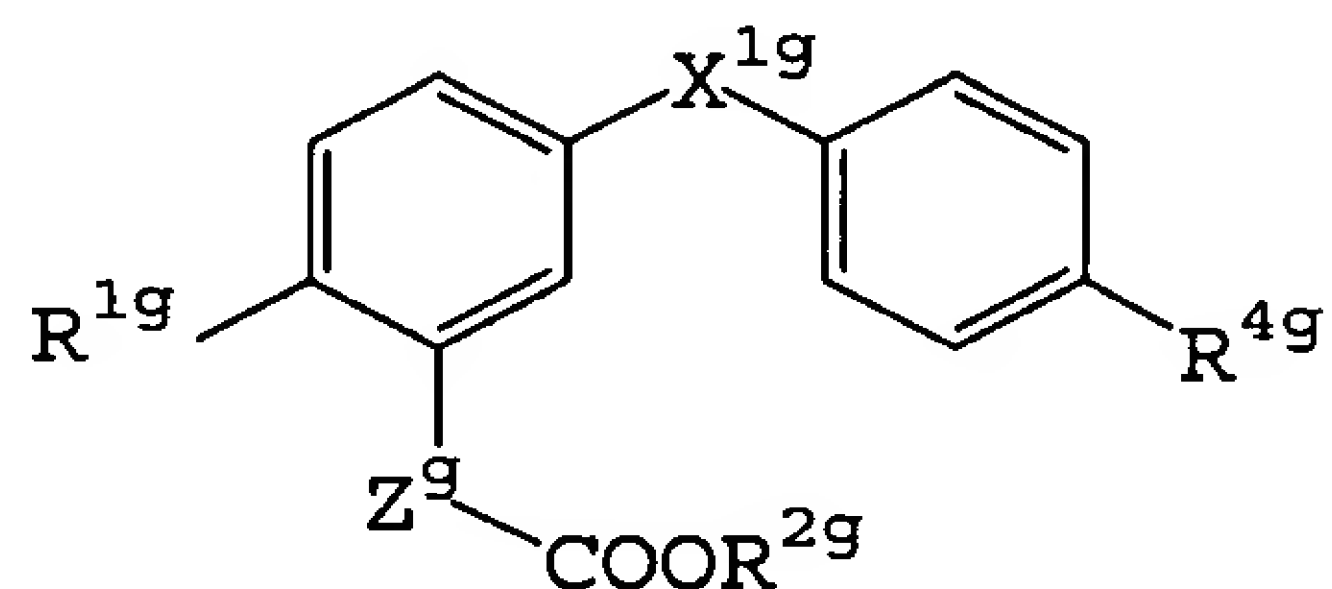
Claim 52. (Previously Presented) A benzene derivative represented by the following formula:



wherein  $\text{R}^{1c}$  represents a halogen atom, a cyano group, a nitro group, a protected hydroxyl group, an unprotected or protected amino group, a mercapto group or an unsubstituted or substituted alkyl, alkenyl, cycloalkyl, aryl, aralkyl, alkoxy, aryloxy, acyl, alkoxycarbonyl, aryloxycarbonyl, carbamoyl, alkylthio, alkylsulfinyl, alkylsulfonyl, alkylamino, acylamino, alkylsulfonylamino, arylsulfonylamino or heterocyclic group;  $\text{R}^{2c}$  represents a hydrogen atom or a protecting group for carboxyl group;  $\text{R}^{3c}$  and  $\text{R}^{4c}$  may be the same or different represent a halogen atom, a cyano group, a nitro group, an unprotected or protected carboxyl group, an unprotected or protected hydroxyl group, an unprotected or protected amino group, a mercapto group or an unsubstituted or substituted alkenyl, cycloalkyl, aryl, aralkyl, alkoxy, aryloxy, acyl, alkoxycarbonyl, aryloxycarbonyl, carbamoyl, alkylthio, alkylsulfinyl, alkylsulfonyl, alkylamino, acylamino, alkylsulfonylamino, arylsulfonylamino or heterocyclic group;  $\text{X}^{1c}$  represents  $-\text{C}(\text{O})-$ ,  $-\text{CH}(\text{OH})-$  or  $-\text{CH}_2-$ ; and  $\text{Z}^c$  represents  $-(\text{CH}_2)_n^c$  - ( $n^c$  represents 2 or 3) or  $-\text{CH}=\text{CH}-$ ;

or a salt thereof.

Claim 53. (Previously Presented) A benzene derivative represented by the following formula:



wherein  $R^{1g}$  is a protected hydroxyl group and  $R^{4g}$  an unprotected or protected hydroxyl group or an unsubstituted or substituted alkoxy group;  $X^{1g}$  is  $-C(O)-$ ,  $-CH(OH)-$  or  $-CH_2-$ ;  $Z^g$  is  $-(CH_2)_n-$  ( $n^g$  represents 2 or 3); and  $R^{2g}$  is a hydrogen atom or a protecting group for carboxyl group;  
or a salt thereof.